

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00284 121742Z

51

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /073 W

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R 121555Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4469

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAPE TOWN 0284

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, RH

SUBJECT: SITHOLE HEARING SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 24

REF: CAPE TOWN 264

1. PRESS REPORTS THAT DETAINED ZANU PRESIDENT, REV. NDABANINGI SITHOLE, HAS SECURED SOUTH AFRICAN LEGAL COUNSEL AND WILL APPEAR BEFORE SPECIAL COURT IN CAMERA HEARING SCHEDULED TO BEGIN MARCH 24. ACCORDING TO RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN, POWERS, FUNCTIONS, AND PROCEDURES OF SPECIAL COURT, TO BE HEADED BY ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE MACDONALD, WILL BE PUBLISHED MARCH 14. OTHER MEMBERS WILL BE APPOINTED ONCE REGULATIONS PUBLISHED. DESPITE IN CAMERA NATURE OF HEARING, SPOKESMAN SAID JUSTICE MACDONALD HAS INDICATED THAT HE INTENDS TO
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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00284 121742Z

HOLD PROCEEDINGS IN PUBLIC "AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE."

2. COMMENT: ACCORDING TO OUR UNDERSTANDING, SPECIAL COURT PROCEEDING TO BEGIN MARCH 24 IS NOT RPT NOT A TRIAL. RATHER, IT IS A HEARING TO DETERMINE WHETHER THERE IS SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO WARRANT SITHOLE'S CONTINUED DETENTION AND, IF SO, TO DETERMINE WHETHER FORMAL CRIMINAL CHARGES LEADING TO A TRIAL SHOULD BE LAID AGAINST HIM. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT HAS MADE NO OFFICIAL STATEMENT CONCERNING WHETHER TRIAL, IF ONE IS DICTATED BY SPECIAL COURT, WILL BE OPEN TO PUBLIC OR HELD IN CAMERA.
HURD

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